

Message Text

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60

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 L-03 NSC-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03

EB-11 SAJ-01 COME-00 TRSE-00 SIL-01 LAB-06 ACDA-19

DRC-01 /119 W

----- 089819

R 251804Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9961

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT

SUBJECT: DEBATE ON THE STATE OF THE NATION

1. THE 12 HOUR DEBATE ON THE STATE OF THE NATION JAN 24
IN THE BUNDESTAG (FOR A SUMMARY OF BRANDT'S ADDRESS SEE
BONN 1406 REFLECTED IN TONE THE YEAR IT DEALT WITH,
SUBDUED AND UNCERTAIN. THE OPPOSITION, WITH THE LAND
ELECTIONS THIS YEAR AND THE 1976 ELECTION FIRMLY IN
MIND, ATTACKED THE FAILURE OF THE GOVERNMENT TO EXTRACT
FROM THE EAST CONCESSIONS AS VALUABLE AS THOSE IT
GRANTED BUT SOUGHT MAINLY TO STIR THE MODEST UNREST THAT
NOW EXISTS IN GERMANY AS A RESULT OF THE OIL CRISIS, A
CONTINUED HIGH RATE OF INFLATION, GROWING POCKETS OF
UNEMPLOYMENT, AND REPEATED ACCUSATIONS THAT THE GOVERN-
MENT IS DANGEROUSLY TOLERANT OF LEFTIST EXTREMISM.

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2. THIS LATTER CHARGE SPURRED WEHNER TO THE ONLY BIT OF

EMOTIONAL ORATORY OF THE DAY, THOUGH ITS OBVIOUS EXCESS OF HEAT OVER SUBSTANCE DENIED IT MUCH IMPACT. THE OPPOSITION PERFORMED WELL, CARSTENS IN PARTICULAR, THOUGH ITS CATALOG OF GOVERNMENT SINS WAS ANALOGOUS IN PETTINESS TO THE CHANCELLOR'S LIST OF GOVERNMENT TRIUMPHS.

3. THE DEBATE REFLECTS, IN PART, THE FACT THAT AT THE MOMENT THE GERMAN VOX POPULI IS REMARKABLY UNCLEAR. OSTPOLITIK EXCITES VERY FEW, EITHER WAY, AN INFLATION RATE THAT A FEW YEARS AGO WOULD HAVE BEEN CALLED SUICIDAL IS BEING SWALLOWED WITH NOT TOO MUCH OUTCRY, UNEMPLOYMENT IS TROUBLESOME ONLY BY GERMAN STANDARDS AND THUS NOT YET AT ALL, SUNDAY DRIVING IS BACK, THE WINTER IS UNUSUALLY MILD, AND EUROPEAN UNION IS STILL THE STUFF FOR ACADEMIC DEBATES. IN SHORT, THE PEOPLE HAVEN'T MADE VERY CLEAR PRECISELY WHERE THEY WANT TO BE LED, AND THE PARTIES SEEM UNABLE TO INDULGE IN MUCH CREATIVE THINKING. GERMANY AT THE MOMENT IS THUS LIKE A HEALTHY, RICH MAN WHO FEELS UNEASY BECAUSE NOTHING VERY SERIOUS IS WRONG WITH HIM.
HILLENBRAND

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30 JUN 2005

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